



Possible hybrid
of *Branta x Anser*
at Brookfield Zoo,
Cook County. 27 Nov. 1994.
Photo by Nancy Bent.

of any birds in captivity at Brookfield Zoo.

Greater White-fronted Geese are migrants through Illinois (Bohlen 1989). Canada Geese are both migrants and breeders in Illinois, depending on which race is under consideration (Bohlen). The Canada Geese the hybrid was associating with were smaller than the Canada Geese that breed on the grounds of Brookfield Zoo ("Giant" Canada Geese, *B.c. maxima*) and were probably of the migratory race that winters in southern Illinois ("Interior" Canada Geese *B.c. interior*).

The hybrid and the flock it was associating with were observed at the zoo for two days (27-28 November), after which the flock disappeared, presumably to continue its southern migration.

The fundamental unit within a flock of Canada Geese is the family, which includes "adopted" individuals (Palmer). The hybrid was seen with a small sub-group of four to five Canada Geese during observations. The hybrid may have been the result of an extra-pair copulation by the breeding female or it may have been adopted by the parent geese.

I believe this is the first report of a *Branta X Anser* hybrid in Illinois. If anyone else knows differently, I would appreciate hearing from them.

I would like to thank Dave Willard for help in tracking down references to goose hybrids, Roger Reason for comments on an earlier draft, and Diane Bell for noticing a strange goose among 50 others.

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A possible hybrid of *Branta x Anser* species, right, with Canada Goose, left, at Brookfield Zoo, Cook County. 27 Nov. 1994 Photo by Nancy Bent.

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